ABSTRACT

Improvements In, or Relating to, Electronic Badges

The present invention makes an electronic visitor's badge available to a person visiting a host computer protected by firewalls, and solves the problem of providing flexible, user friendly, access without compromising security. The present invention permits persons located behind an address translating firewall, which only allows HTTP, to obtain controlled access to privileged data information without compromising data security. The badge establishes a reliable contact from which only trustworthy instructions will emanate, i.e. the instructions will only come from an approved and security cleared visitor. Initial contact between a visitor and the host, i.e. an individual responsible for operation of the host computer, is established via a telephone conversation over the PSTN. Visitor and host agree on a password, or code word. The code is added, possibly in encrypted form, to the source code of an electronic badge. The electronic badge may be a Java applet which is compiled and placed on a webserver protected by the password. When downloaded onto a visitor's computer, the electronic badge mediates communication between the visitor's computer and a protected host computer. The present invention can be used in any situation where individuals wish to work on a common computer and it is not possible to exchange hardware, but the individuals are able to recognize each others voices. The invention facilitates secure control of access to a secure computer facility via exchange of identity badges over the Internet.